



Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting of St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley with Gussage St Andrew.

Date: 3rd November 2010

Venue: The Vicarage

Chair: Rev Mel Durrant

Started: 7:30pm

Ended: 9:20pm

Present:

Mrs Naomi Booth
 Mrs Bobby Carter
 Mr John Cullingford¹
 Rev Mel Durrant
 Mrs Jackie Molnar
 Mr David Salmons²
 Rev Paul Skinner
 Mr Mark Wolstenholme (Secretary)
 Miss Carole Wyatt (Churchwarden)

Apologies for absence:

Mr Mike Carter
 Mr Ted Cox
 Mr John Davis
 Mr David Lockyer (Treasurer)
 Mrs Christine Warner

1 Licensed Lay Minister

2 Diocesan representative

Summary of meeting:

- [20] • Minutes of last meeting approved
- [21] • No matters arising
- [23] • Christmas services outlined
 - LPA update on drop-in sessions next year
 - Visit and talk by Child Link founder next summer
 - Open Homes for Children & ShelterBox charities
 - Initial look at new vision statement and strapline
- [24] • New treasurer and bank account
- [25] • Financial brief
 - Gift to the Army Benevolent Fund agreed
- [26] • Building and Fabric update
 - Payment for porch light approved
- [27] • Rewiring at St Andrew's delayed pending approval of specification
- [28] • Theft of lead from St Mary's roof
- [29] • Churchyard - thanks to recent work parties
 - Space for graves reviewed. More space to be freed up
- [30] • Friends of St Mary's - first look at setting up a group
- [31] • Fundraising and social events
- [32] • Synod report
- [33] • Any Other Business (AOB) – Charity (Acts345) to be discussed in Jan
- [34] • Date of next meeting – Wednesday 8th December at 7.30pm

[20] Welcome

Mel welcomed everyone to the meeting. Paul S read from Matthew 6 v25–34 “Do not worry”. Mel prayed.

[21] Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of 3rd November 2010 were approved and signed.

[22] Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that were not covered by the agenda.

[23] Worship and ministry (Mel D)

(a) Christmas services - a great time to invite new people to. Mel went through the list of services;

Fri 17th Dec 6.00pm Gussage St Andrew Carols by Candlelight

Sun 19th Dec 6.00pm Sixpenny Handley Carols by Candlelight

Mon 20th Dec 6.00pm Pentridge Carols by Candlelight

Fri 24th Dec 5.00pm Christingle, St Mary's

11.30pm Midnight Communion, St Mary's

Sat 25th Dec 9.30am Family Communion, St Mary's

(b) The LPAs reviewed the Saturday drop-ins at their meeting and want them to return for an extended run next year, covering the whole of British Summer Time. They have been very successful. Improving the curb-side advertising of the drop-in was raised. The PCC thanked the LPAs for their efforts in make this a success this year.

(c) Child Link is a charity helping orphanages in India (www.child-link.org.uk). There will be a visit to this country by the founder, Rev John Arul, next summer. We've been offered the chance for him to talk at our morning services next June. A bigger venue may be sought. The PCC might want to consider a more regular support of the charity.

Paul S mentioned the Open Homes for Children charity which had recently been promoted on breakfast television.

John C mentioned the Cornish-based disaster relief charity ShelterBox for consideration at our charity review meeting in January.

(d) A new Vision statement for St Mary's. After discussions at the PCC Away Day, it was felt that any vision statement should be distilled into a tag or strap line that could be used on all our published material. This would hopefully encourage people to think more about what we are and what we do, as well as acting as a reminder to ourselves! The PCC were encouraged to think and pray about this. The meeting spent a short time discussing this and kicking around ideas as a way of making a start on finding the right phrase that worked.

My Notes:

[24] New treasurer

David L and David S were thanked by the PCC for all their hard work over a very long period of time. Mel announced that we now have a new treasurer from Milton Abbas, Ricky (Richard) Ironside. He used to work in the Dorset County Council finance department and is treasurer for his current church and benefice. Ricky will only be charging expenses.

Changes to cheque signatories as well as a new bank account will need to be sorted out in due course. The new bank account will allow cash deposits to be made through the Post Office which will be much more convenient. A hand-over period will now begin.

A new Gift Aid secretary will be required as Graham Smith will be stepping down. However, the new treasurer will probably bring in different ways of doing things which may alter this role.

[25] Financial brief

The Financial brief was looked at by the PCC. David S explained some of the figures and money transfers. Concern over the drop in the collection was highlighted. Weekly income needs to be £600–800, but some cash collections have dropped to below £250. A shortfall of £2–3,000 in Share payment is likely by year end.

General attendance figures over the year have been up, especially for the 11 o'clock service which is encouraging.

The amount to be gifted to the Army Benevolent Fund out of the takings for the recent concert, as agreed, to be decided by the PCC. Only a small profit was made this year, partly due to numbers and partly due to transport costs (about £325). £50 agreed, proposed by Carol W, seconded by Paul S. Passed. The meeting felt that maybe the event should become biannual.

[26] Buildings and Fabric

Thanks to Rita Taylor and Chris Stokes for the cleaning effort at St Andrews Chapel after a family of birds had nested in the church.

The new wooden doors in St Mary's are being eased by Graham Dyer and the stone floor at the back of the church will have its grouting improved by the person who did the floor in the tower. The money allocated has been held back until completion of this.

The heating and lighting in St Mary's cannot go ahead until the start of 2011 at the earliest and will not move forward until we have the funds and have had time to evaluate the best solution.

The porch light at St Mary's will be replaced tomorrow for £150+VAT (estimated was £300). The PCC agreed to release funds of up to £200 to the contractors; proposed by Naomi B, seconded by Paul S.

My Notes:

[27] Project Team update: St Andrew's Chapel electrical work

Delays to the rewiring in St Andrew's Chapel. The DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) have said that after our choice of electrical contractor, the specification was sufficiently different to the original proposal that it would be passed to their heating and lighting experts for scrutiny and approval. The planned heating scheme was accepted, but the lighting expert has questioned a number of aspects to the lighting scheme, in particular to the type of cabling to be used. The contractors, Mitchells, assert that the materials are perfectly suitable and have been used in similar situations. The DAC are likely to insist on a higher specification cable which will impact on the cost. Permission for the outside light has now been approved by the East Dorset District Council's conservation department. It is unlike, due to the DAC approvals that are required, that this work can commence until January or February at the earliest.

The organ at St Andrew's is suffering from the damp. The suggestion of a portable organ that need not be kept in the chapel is being considered.

[28] Theft of lead from St Mary's roof.

About three bays of lead has been stolen from the east side of the north gully. The theft occurred in early October. All the appropriate organisations, such as the Police, have been contacted. Any replacement work will require a Faculty, although because this is a problem that a number of churches have suffered in recent times, there shouldn't be any delays in approval. Approval for a time-limited temporary repair. John C has made an emergency repair with roofing felt.

It is quite likely that the thieves will return and try to remove more lead. The PCC discussed the options, including removing the remaining lead ourselves prior to replacement with a substitute material. The expected cost is expected to be between £5–10,000. Four quotes have been sought for;

- 1) Mineralised temporary repair
- 2) Repair the stolen area with lead
- 2) Repair the stolen area with stainless steel
- 3) Full replacement of the whole gully with stainless steel

The insurance will not cover the whole amount of the repair and is limited to £5,000 within any given policy year. The steel substitute has the advantage that it looks like the lead that it replaces but is, for all practical purposes, worthless. The use of an alternative material may not be approved by the DAC although it has been used on other churches. John C and Carole W were thanked for their work, dealing with the Police and making temporary repairs. Possible security measures and deterrents discussed, but nothing easy or effective.

My Notes:

[29] Churchyard

A big thank you to George Jackson, Ted Cox, Mary Bishop, Paul Skinner and the team for all their hard work tidying up the churchyard in the Autumn. A further work party is planned for 20th November.

Mel has reviewed the space available for graves with Richard Adlem and there should be two years' worth at present. The extension at the bottom beyond the stone wall towards the recreation ground will be cleared and the spoil heap over by the gate moved down to free up a lot more space. The extension will then be consecrated. Once that is done space for graves will not be a problem for a long time to come.

David S mentioned on behalf of Ted C the removal of lichen from the gravestones shouldn't be done. It is a natural aging of the stone which becomes a part of its history and removal can accelerate the decay of the gravestone.

[30] Friends of St Mary's

This was first raised at the PCC Away day. An article from the Church Times was given out as a source of good advice for the PCC to consider and pray about. Someone would be required to head up the Friends of St Mary's group, which would be a separate registered charity. It would be a good way to further engage the local community.

[31] Fundraising and social events

Preparations for the Christmas Fayre by Bobby and Jean are in hand. Every effort to make this a big success should be made by all.

Mel reiterated the concern about the shortfall in giving. Thanks to John C for his efforts with the Historic Churches bike ride which raised £350.

[32] Synod report

David S reported that the Diocesan Synod sits this Saturday with a full agenda especially concerning the start of the discussion about the ordination of women Bishops. The next Deanery Synod is an open meeting on Nov 17th at 7.30pm in the Parish Rooms, Blandford.

[33] Any Other Business (AOB)

Charity www.acts345.co.uk will be discussed in full in January.

[34] Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 8th December and will focus on finance. Please bring a mince pie or two to share.

The meeting finished in prayer at 9.20pm

My Notes: